sulphur content to within acceptable limits.

(iii) Already, LSHS is on OGL and this freedom would be extended for non-traditional fuels like condensate and orimulsion subject to actual user condition.

(iv) However, there would be no obligation for Oil PSUs to give fresh linkages for any new projects, except Naphtha based projects within a ceiling of 12000 MW and projects based on other fuels for which linkages have already been issued.

The modified policy enabbles State Governments to promote power plants on fuels other than Naphtha without any quantitative rstriction, Additional requirement of naphtha has also to be accommodated within the revised policy.

Private Participation in Exploration Activities

2556. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to speed up necessary action for encouraging private participation for both Indian and foreign exploration activities;

(b) if so, the details of the fresh steps taken in this direction;

(c) whether the exploration activities of the ONGC are not found satisfactory; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and efforts taken to boost exploration activities by ONGC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) In keeping with the Policy of Govenrment of India for encouraging Pvt. participation to suplement the activities of National Oil companies by both Indian and foreign private companies in exploration activities, Government of India has been inviting offers from these companies from time to time. On the basis of offers received since 1992 Government of India has earned Production Sharing Contracts for 15 exploration blocks. In addition to the above, to increase the pace of exploration in the country and to encourage Pvt. participation, Government of India has announced New Exploration Licensing Policy. The major incentives provided under NELP to Pvt. companies include—

—Level playing field to National Oil companies viz-z-viz Private Oil companies.

—Freedom to contractors for maketing of crude oil & gas in domestic market.

—Royalty Payment for oil at the rate of 12.5% for onland and 10% for offshore areas with 5% for first 7 years of production for deep water areas beyond 400m bathymetry.

—Abolition of cess

—Exemption from payment of import duty on goods imported for petroleum operations.

—Abloition of signature, discovery or production bonuses.

—Seven year tax holiday from date of commencement of Commercial Production.

—Fiscal staility to. contractor during entire period of contract.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Disputed Tax Liability of the ONGC

5557. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased te state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the disputed tax liability of the ONGC works out to some 2157 crores, as reported in the Indian Express, dated 18th June, 1998;

(b) if so, whether an exercise has been undertaken to take advantage of the Kar Vivad Samadhan Scheme proposed by the Finance Minister for the current financial year; and

(c) the details of the pay out scheme i worked out, if any, to liquidate the debts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) As per ONGC there is a disputed demand of Rs 1407.93 crores towards Corporate Tax and Rs. 739.45 crores towards excise duty.

(b) As per the expert legal opinion obtained by ONGC, report of Income Tax Department and Excise Department are not tenable. As such, the Corporation has no proposal to avail the benefits of Kar vivad Samadhan Scheme.

(c) Out of the disputed Corporate Tax liability of Rs. 1407.93 crores, a sum of Rs. 452.25 crores has been adjusted by the Income Tax Department and a further sum of Rs. 100 Crores has been paid by the Corporation pursuant to the order of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal, Delhi.

Criteria for Award of Oil Blocks to Private Companies

2558. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 121, given in the Rajya Sabha on 4th June, 1998 and state;

(a) the criteria adopted by the Ministry in selecting 18 blocks for award to the private parties;

(b) of the 18 blocks awarded to private companies, how many of the blocks were explored by the national oil companies and the details thereof;

(c) the details of expenditure incurred by the national oil companies on each of the blocks explored by them;

(d) how Government are going to compensate Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited and Oil India Limited with regard to the expenditure incurred by them; and

(e) whether time bond action plan for oil and gas recovery from these fields have been guaranteed from the private parties; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and would be laid on the Table of the House.

जसपुर नगर में रसोई गैस की एजेन्सियां

2559.**श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव**: क्या पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) सरकार ने जसपुर नगर तथा आसपास के अन्य नगरों में अब तक रसोई गैस की कितनी एजेन्सियां खोली हैं;और

(ख) वर्ष 1998-99 के दौरान इन क्षेत्रों में और कितनी नई एजेन्सियां खोलने हेतु विज्ञापन प्रकाशित कराए गए हैं?

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री संतोष कुमार गंगवार): (क) तेल कंपनियों ने बताया है कि वर्तमान में जसपुर नगर में कोई एल पी जी डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरशिप नहीं हैं ।

(ख) जसपुर जिलान्तर्गत दो स्थान नामतया पाथलगांव तथा जसपुर नगर हाल ही में इंडियन आयल कापार्रेशन लिमिटेड द्वारा एल पी जी डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरशिप के लिए विज्ञापित किए गए है । एक डीलरशिप/ डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरशिप आरंभ होने में सामान्यतया तेल कंपनियों द्वारा विज्ञापन जारी किए जाने के पश्चात् 1 से 2 वर्ष तक का समय लगता हैं ।

Demand and Supply of LPG

2560. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total demand of LPG during the year 1996 and 1997 and the extent of LPG supplied against it, State-wise; and